



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Needles Field Office

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Contact: (760) 326-7000, 1303 South Highway 95, Needles, CA 92363

General Rules & Regulations

The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Needles Field Office is responsible for managing public lands in eastern San Bernardino County, California. This includes the general area from the Colorado River west to Ludlow and Wonder Valley, CA as well as the area from Primm, NV south to the San Bernardino County line. Within this area, the BLM enforces federal rules and regulations relating to the public lands and their resources. Included in this informational handout are general rules and regulations pertaining to camping, developed recreation sites and areas, hunting, off-highway vehicles (OHV), public conduct, recreational hunting and shooting, and wildfire prevention. This handout does not include every regulation, only those that the office receives frequent questions about. If you observe anyone violating any of these regulations or if you would like to report any other suspicious activity please contact our Federal Interagency Communication Center toll-free at (888) 233-6518. We appreciate your cooperation and we hope you enjoy your public lands.

Camping:

- Visitors may camp on public lands up to 14 days within any 28 day period. After 14 days, visitors must move a distance of 25 miles from their previous location. Visitors may not camp on lands affected by a land use authorization, active mining claim, or within 200 yards of a waterhole, spring, seep, or a man-made watering device for wildlife.
- Visitors may not use as firewood, or have in your possession, any firewood materials containing nails, screws, or other metal hardware. Camps must also be kept free of litter and debris at all times.

Developed Recreation Sites and Areas:

- The Amboy Crater National Natural Landmark, Bonanza Spring Day Use Area, Horse Thief Campground, Mexican Hat Campsites, and Ivanpah Dry Lake Bed are considered Developed Recreation Sites. In these areas, visitors must keep animals on a leash, maintain campfires within designated areas, keep audio devices to a reasonable level, and not discharge or use a firearm or firework.
- Amboy Crater also has additional supplemental rules that apply within its boundaries. Visitors may not operate motor vehicles around any traffic control barrier, park a vehicle in an undisturbed area, disturb or possess any mammal, bird, reptile, or plant life, or hike on the north slope of the crater. Camping is also restricted to previously disturbed areas.

Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV)

- Visitors may not operate an OHV on public lands in a manner causing, or likely to cause significant, undue damage to or disturbance of the soil, wildlife, wildlife habitat, improvements, cultural, or vegetative resources or other authorized uses of the public lands.
- All OHV's operated in California must be registered through the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). "Non-Resident OHV Permits" are required for visitors who are not California residents **and** do not have their OHV registered in another state. For more information, please visit the California State Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division (OHMVR Division) website at www.ohv.parks.ca.gov.
- A driver's license is not required to operate an OHV on public lands. However, anyone with a suspended or revoked driver's license may not operate an OHV on public lands.
- ATV riders under 18 years of age must either be in possession of an ATV safety certificate **or** be under the direct supervision of an adult who has an ATV safety certificate. ATV riders under 14 years of age must be in possession of an ATV safety certificate **and** be directly supervised by an adult.
- ROV (or UTV) operators must be at least 16 years of age, or be directly supervised in the vehicle by a parent or guardian or by an adult authorized by the parent or guardian.
- Visitors may not operate or ride in an ATV or ROV (UTV) on public lands without wearing a safety helmet and are only allowed to occupy a location of an ATV or ROV that is designed for a passenger (except for ROV's built prior to 2014, where passengers may ride in non-manufacturer designated seats if contained in the rollover cage). Operators of dirt bikes are not required to wear a safety helmet although it is recommended. All OHV's must have a working muffler, spark arrestor, brake system, headlight, and red taillight.
- OHV's may not be ridden at any speed that is unsafe for the conditions or operated above 15 mph within 50 feet of a campsite or congregation of people. It is also prohibited to operate an OHV in a wilderness area or off of designated routes and trails. Cross-country travel with an OHV is not allowed.

Public Conduct:

- Visitors may not deface, disturb, remove, or destroy any personal property, or structure, or any scientific, cultural, archaeological or historical resource, natural object, or area.
- Personal property may not be left unattended on public lands for more than 10 days or more than 24 hours within a Developed Recreation Area.
- Except in Developed Recreation Sites, visitors may collect the following for non-commercial purposes: Flowers, berries, nuts, seeds, cones, leaves, rocks, mineral specimens, common invertebrate fossils, semiprecious gemstones, mineral materials, forest products for use in campfires, and petrified wood. Visitors may not cut or damage forest products during the collection of fire wood. Visitors may collect "dead and downed" wood (except for Desert Ironwood).

Recreational Hunting and Shooting:

- The use and possession of firearms on BLM public lands is primarily regulated by the State of California. For specific information related to firearm laws, please visit the California Department of Justice website at www.ag.ca.gov/firearms.
- Hunting on BLM public lands is regulated by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Migratory Bird hunting is also regulated under Title 50 Code of Federal Regulations Part 20. For more information, please visit the CDFW website at www.dfg.ca.gov and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife website at www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/.
- A visitor may carry an unconcealed loaded firearm on public lands managed by the Needles Field Office except within the city limits of Needles, CA. California penal code prohibits a person from carrying a loaded firearm in any public place within an incorporated city or in any public place in a prohibited area of an unincorporated territory.
- It is illegal to possess a loaded rifle or shotgun in any vehicle which is standing on or along or is being driven on or along any public highway or other way open to the public. A "Public road or other way open to the public", includes any roads (dirt or otherwise), trails, open fields, or parking lots open to public access. A rifle or shotgun shall be deemed to be loaded when there is an unexpended cartridge or shell in the firing chamber.
- Visitors may shoot firearms on all BLM public lands managed by the Needles Field Office except in areas closed to shooting and hunting such as Developed Recreation Sites and public lands within the Needles City Limits. Recreational shooting is also prohibited within the Mopah Spring Area of Critical Environmental Concern and within ½ mile of the World War II Divisional Training Camps (Valid hunting is allowed in these areas). Visitors may not engage in shooting that creates a hazard or nuisance to the public such as using incendiary, tracer, steel core, or armor piercing ammunition.
- Visitors must not dispose of any flammable or non-flammable materials on public lands. This includes ammunition casings, targets, clay pigeon fragments, and any other debris related to recreational shooting activities.
- Visitors may not shoot at game from a motor vehicle or aircraft. It is also prohibited to shoot from a roadway or across a public roadway. This includes BLM routes and trails.

Wilderness:

- Visitors may not use any form of mechanical transport, motorized equipment, or motor vehicle inside of a wilderness area. In addition, visitors may not land any type of aircraft, (including hot air balloons, parasails, hang gliders, and parachutes) inside of a wilderness area.
- Visitors may use wheelchairs and items such as flashlights, cameras, cellular phones, radios, GPS devices, or other similar hand held or portable equipment inside of wilderness areas.

Wildfire Prevention:

- The Needles Field Office is under special rules called fire prevention orders. These orders include both year-round and seasonal restrictions. The year-round restrictions prohibit the use and possession of all fireworks. They also prohibit visitors from burning tires, petroleum products, wires, magnesium, or hazardous and explosive materials. The seasonal restrictions are generally in effect from May through October. During this time, campfires are only allowed in Developed Recreation Sites and controlled flame devices, such as portable stoves, can be used only after a permit is obtained at the Needles Field Office.
- Visitors may not leave a fire without extinguishing it or cause a fire other than a campfire.

Wildlife Protection:

- Wildlife found on BLM public lands are primarily managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). For specific information related to wildlife, please visit the CDFW website at www.dfg.ca.gov.
- Visitors may not catch any fish, amphibians, reptiles (lizards), mollusks or crustaceans without a valid sport fishing license issued by the State of California.
- Wild Burros are protected under the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971. Visitors may not injure, harass, remove, or destroy a Wild Burro regardless of whether the burro is on public lands or not.
- Golden Eagles are protected under the Bald Eagle Act of 1940. Visitors may not pursue, hunt, capture, kill, or possess a Golden Eagle or any part, nest, or egg of such birds.
- The Desert Tortoise is listed as a Threatened Species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is protected under the Endangered Species Act of 1973. Visitors may not harm, possess, or transport these reptiles. Domesticated Desert Tortoises can be adopted under a permit issued by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. For more information on the adoption process, please visit the CDFW website at www.dfg.ca.gov.

Any person who knowingly and willfully violates BLM rules and regulations can be subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 and can be imprisoned for up to 1 year. In addition, violations of certain federal laws and regulations, such as those related to wilderness areas, carry penalties that exceed \$1,000. This handout does not list all of the regulations pertaining to BLM public lands. For more information, contact the Needles Field Office at (760) 326-7000, visit our website at www.blm.gov/ca/needles, or come to our office at 1303 South Highway 95, Needles, CA 92363.